DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 229 619 CE 035 980

AUTHOR Campbell, Elizabeth
TITLE Community Education and Housing Needs.
INSTITUTION United States Conference of Mayors, Washington, D. C.
SPONS AGENCY Department of Education, Washington, DC.
PUB DATE [82]
GRANT G008006831
NOTE 29p.; For related documents, see CE 035 981-982.
PUB TYPE Viewpoints (120) -- Reports - Descriptive (141)

EDRS PRICE MF01/PC02 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS Agency Cooperation; Citizen Participation; *Community Education; Community Involvement; *Educational Benefits; Educational Cooperation; Educational Planning; Educational Trends; Guidelines; *Housing Needs; *Neighborhood Improvement; Outcomes of Education; Program Descriptions; Program Development; Program Effectiveness; Program Implementation; School Closing; School Community Relationship; *School Role; Trend Analysis; *Urban Areas; Urban Education
IDENTIFIERS Alaska (Anchorage); Colorado (Colorado Springs); Home Repair; Home Security; Kansas (Wichita); Massachusetts (Boston); Massachusetts (Newton); Minnesota (Minneapolis); Weatherization

ABSTRACT

Because it is based upon the premise that learning is a lifelong process and that citizen involvement is essential to neighborhood problem solving, community education is particularly attuned to the current needs of cities and can be particularly effective in responding to urban housing needs. One way in which leaders can simultaneously address the problems caused by urban school closings and housing shortages is to convert vacant schools into housing with community education centers. In the past few years, such community educational centers have been successful in contributing to neighborhood preservation through home repair, weatherization, and home security programs. Included among the cities that have such programs are Newton, Massachusetts; Boston, Massachusetts; Anchorage, Alaska; Colorado Springs, Colorado; Minneapolis, Minnesota; Roanoke, Virginia; and Wichita, Kansas. (This issue paper contains descriptions of the community education programs in each of the above-mentioned cities as well as implementation strategies and resources for use in initiating the community education process.) (MN)

****
* Reproductions supplied by EDRS are the best that can be made *
* from the original document. *
****

CE

COMMUNITY EDUCATION AND HOUSING NEEDS

ED229619

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF EDUCATION
EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)

✓ This document has been reproduced as received from the person or organization originating it.

☐ Minor changes have been made to improve reproduction quality.

• Points of view or opinions stated in this document do not necessarily represent official NIE position or policy.

UNITED STATES
CONFERENCE OF MAYORS

CE035980

United States Conference of Mayors

Helen G. Boosalis, President
Mayor of Lincoln, Nebraska

John J. Gunther
Executive Director

Acknowledgement

This issue paper was written by Elizabeth Campbell, Staff Associate, in consultation with Carol Moody Becker, Staff Director for the Community Education Program of the United States Conference of Mayors. The community education activities of the Conference fall under the Office of Employment, Education and Human Resources, which is directed by James L. Parsons.

This publication was prepared by the U.S. Conference of Mayors under grant number G008006831 from the Department of Education. The findings and conclusions expressed herein do not necessarily reflect the policies of the Department of Education.

Preface

The U.S. Conference of Mayors, with the support of the Department of Education, has explored over the past three years the relationship of community education to city government. Information on the multipurpose nature of the community education process and the way in which this process can address mayoral concerns has been gathered in site visits to more than twenty cities throughout the country. The purpose of this publication is to demonstrate to Mayors how the community education process can be used to address social concerns which many Mayors are facing today.

First Phase

The information dissemination activities undertaken during the first phase of the Conference's Community Education Program resulted in the publication *Community Education and City Goals and Services: A Report to the Mayors,* sent to all Mayors of cities over 30,000 in population. This report presented a broad overview of how Mayors can use the community education process to develop urban programs and respond to the needs of their cities. Three issue papers were also published and focused on how community education can address specific urban issues of concern to Mayors. These were:

Community Education and Human Services,

Community Education and Services to the Elderly,

Community Education and Substance Abuse Prevention.

Current Program

In the current phase of the Conference of Mayors Community Education Program, three new issue papers have been published to continue the series of publications relating community education to specific issues of concern to Mayors. These are:

Community Education and Housing Needs,

Community Education and Health Services,

Community Education and Multiculturalism: Immigrant/Refugee Needs and Cultural Awareness.

The separate papers have been designed to give Mayors an overview of the community education process before they send each publication on to

the appropriate staff person for program follow-up.

As can be seen from the disparate issues addressed in the series of six papers, community education is a process which Mayors can use to take the initiative in a wide range of program areas. Each paper presents an overview of the relationship of community education to urban concerns, and focuses on how a specific issue can be addressed by the community education process. This focus includes a discussion of the issue's trends and problems, the ways in which community education processes can relate specifically to those problems, and case studies of specific cities using community education to develop and implement innovative programs to respond to the issue under consideration.

Special Acknowledgement

The Conference wishes to express its appreciation to the Mayors of the cities highlighted in this paper, their staff members, and the local community educators who provided invaluable insights and information on the community education programs in their cities.

Special thanks is given to the Department of Education for its ongoing support of the Conference's community education efforts and to Mary Boo, Larry Decker, and Suzanne Fletcher, who provided the community educators' perspective for this publication.

Definition of Community Education

Community education is people of all ages in a community coming together to identify their needs and develop programs to meet those needs through the use of locally available resources and coordination of services.

Minimum Elements of Community Education

Although community education programs are so diverse that there is no uniform model, the federal government has defined the following minimum elements of a community education program:

- **Role of the School:** A public elementary or secondary school should be directly (but not exclusively) involved in administering and operating this program.
- **Community Served:** It should be an identified community, which at least includes the regular attendance area of the school.
- **Community Center:** It should be a public facility, whether an elementary or secondary school, a college, or a park center. The facility should offer a broad scope of services—educational, recreational, health care, cultural; complement the school's regular program; and extend the services normally offered by the public facility.
- **Community Needs:** These should be identified and documented on a continuing basis in order to respond to community interests and concerns.
- **Community Resources and Interagency Cooperation:** The program should use as much as possible educational, cultural, recreational, and other resources located outside the school, and combine forces with other public and private agencies in the community.
- **People Served:** They should include all age groups as well as groups with special needs, such as people with limited English-speaking ability, and the mentally and physically handicapped.
- **Community Involvement in Governance:** Various institutions, groups, and individuals in the community should participate in assessing the community's needs, and in operating and evaluating the programs.

From these elements it can be seen that community education is both a program and a process. The programs are community determined and broad in scope, and are offered to residents at community schools (or other public facilities) which serve as the base of operation. But community education is also a process that actively involves citizens in decision making, makes maximum use of a community's human and physical resources, and facilitates the coordination of services.

Community education is of benefit to cities because it reduces duplication in services through better communication between agencies. It draws together a community's resources into a cooperative relationship helping to reduce fragmentation. And community education increases local involvement and participation in the community, leading to more relevant and responsive services.

A Mayor's View

Mayor Carole Keeton McClellan of Austin, Texas, is a strong supporter of community education. She took the lead in initiating community education in her city during her tenure as school board president. Mayor McClellan has given the following definition* of this dynamic process which provides responsive neighborhood services.

> Community schools and community education represent a philosophy which embraces in concept both program and process. The community education program, the classes and the activity, is a magnet which draws people into the process. The process is the total involvement of community resources in identifying and meeting the needs and wants of the people.
>
> Community education brings together and coordinates the resources of individuals, schools, organizations, and various social and health agencies, to avoid costly duplication of effort. It facilitates the communication between communities, the school, and city government and enables them to work more cooperatively.
>
> The school in effect becomes the center of the community's academic, social, cultural, recreational, and educational life. In essence, community education serves to recycle schools back into the town hall idea.

*From "A Speech on Community Education" by Mayor Carole Keeton McClellan, presented at the Mayors Leadership Institute, May, 1978, Austin, Texas.

I. Introduction: The Benefits of Community Education

Although most Mayors do not have legal jurisdiction over school districts, they are increasingly called upon by their constituents to address school problems such as finances, teacher strikes, busing, and school closings. Mayors are also concerned about the quality of their public school systems. Inadequately educated youngsters find it difficult to be self-sufficient and often require special support services. Additionally, public education impacts upon a city's economic development because a good school system helps to maintain a stable tax base and to attract new industry. Community education is being looked upon by many Mayors as a way to strengthen the public schools and to make better use of local resources.

Community Education Philosophy

The community education philosophy is based on the premise that learning is a life-long process and that citizen involvement is essential to neighborhood problem solving. The concept, which can be adapted to a specific community's needs and resources, holds that local institutions, agencies, and businesses can be used and coordinated in the community education process.[1]

This philosophy is particularly attuned to the current needs of cities. Citizens have come to consider participatory democracy as the norm rather than the exception and need a process for regular input. In these times of diminishing public funds, cities must maximize their local resources. And people today place high priority upon continuing their education for vocational advancement, as well as for personal achievement.

The community education process helps community members to: (a) assess community needs at neighborhood and city-wide levels; (b) organize programs; (c) monitor and evaluate services; and (d) advocate for community determined priorities.[2] This process brings the people of a given community together in a public facility, generally a school, to discuss their needs, interests, and problems. They devise solutions to fit these needs, using locally available resources and skills. It is people working together in a group small enough for the members to identify with—the community. As a group they accomplish what they cannot do as individuals.[3]

This process of maximizing community involvement and resources can respond to urban priorities, such as housing. The community education process allows neighborhood residents to

come together to assess housing needs in their communities. These needs can range from the provision of new or renovated housing units for specific populations to home repair and weatherization. Once the community has set its housing priorities, the community education program can develop and sponsor corresponding activities and services, using both public and private resources.

Community Education as a Process for City/School Cooperation

As Mayors have been seeking ways to support and improve public school systems, educators have been perceiving a broader scope for schools. Community education is increasingly the process both Mayors and educators are using to strengthen public support for school systems and to better serve their constituents. This process, which stresses citizen participation, attracts both Mayors and educators because it provides a vehicle for the coordination of existing human, physical, and financial resources. Neighborhood schools and other public facilities become the focal point of activity, serving as multipurpose community education centers offering services and programs in response to community need.

Cities and school districts serve and tax similar or identical constituencies. Community education allows Mayors and educators to maximize tax dollars and services, often without starting new programs or allocating additional funds. This benefit is important because in these times of shrinking resources, Mayors are reluctant to initiate programs which could become popular with constituents but be subject to discontinuation due to necessary budget cuts.

Why Mayors Like Community Education

Community education has many advantages for cities. Mayors have cited the following benefits to the Conference during site visits and communication with 74 cities involved in community education.

- *Budgetary Savings*

  Well planned community education programs allow cities to save dollars while providing the same or more services. These savings are based on the coordination of services and activities delivered to the community. One example is the Colorado Springs program. Before community education started in Colorado Springs the school district charged the recreation department up to $150,000 annually for services. Now the city contributes $40,000 to the community education program in return for the same services and new benefits.

- *Political Support for Public Programs*

  In these days of tight funds for government and citizens, all segments of society look for public dollars to serve their interests. Community education is available to all and can become a vested interest of all. Its cost effectiveness is particularly appealing to taxpayers. As Mayor Thomas Dunn of Elizabeth, New Jersey, states, "This [community education] concept of combining resources is good economics, and believe you me, it's good politics. People respond to leaders who understand and try to meet their needs."

- *Neighborhood Stabilization*

  Stable neighborhoods create stable tax bases and minimize social disruption, which can lead to high crime rates. Community education stabilizes neighborhoods on an affirmative basis rather than on a reactive, exclusionary one. The citizen participation component gives people a sense of pride and ownership in their community. In Austin, Texas, the community education program, which is jointly funded and administered by the city and the school district, has significantly reduced vandalism in schools and adjacent neighborhoods.

- *Public Support for Schools*

  Community education provides a direct means for citizens to become involved with their schools and community colleges. The more involved the public becomes in their education system, the greater the interest in strengthening it. Many cities attribute favorable votes on school bonds to their community education programs. Mayor McClellan of Austin, Texas, speaks of the strong public support for school bonds now that the community has become more involved in the schools through the extensive community education program in that city.

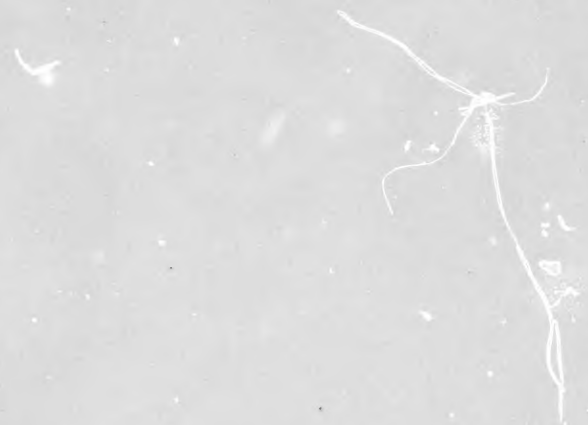
A Positive Approach

The community education concept offers Mayors a means to improve the quality of life in their cities. This concept brings families together to participate in recreational and educational programs and can focus social services on the needs of families and neighborhoods. Communities benefit because the city is able to provide more efficient and responsive services through coordination of programs. And finally, citizen participation in the identification and solution of problems leads to a greater sense of community identity and neighborhood pride.

Addressing Urban Priorities

Mayors are using community education to address significant urban issues. This paper describes how community education can respond to housing needs, a priority concern in many cities. As previously described, community education can provide a system for coordination and delivery of services. In regard to housing, these services can include programs in home repair, weatherization, and home security. Moreover, the community education process facilitates city/school cooperation, resulting in a more efficient use of community resources.

This paper presents the problems and trends in the housing issue and the ways in which the community education process can respond specifically to those issues. Newton is presented as a case study of a city which has been able to provide needed housing and community centers through the use of the community education process. Boston is also highlighted for its unique construction of a housing tower adjacent to a community education center. A subsequent chapter describes the ways in which the community education programs in various cities have responded to housing needs. While the cities mentioned in this issue paper represent a cross section of activities based on our contact with local government and school officials, this publication has not been designed as a comprehensive listing of community education programs in cities.



II. Problems and Trends In Schools and Housing

With today's soaring inflation, cities are being challenged to seek ways of providing services for less money through more intensive use of available resources and more cooperative planning. Faced with service cutbacks, city officials must find ways to meet the basic immediate and long-term needs of their citizens, including the needs for adequate housing, home improvement, and for neighborhood centers.

These housing issues often relate to overall neighborhood preservation. People are beginning to use more than monetary values in looking at their neighborhoods. Increasingly, they see social and asthetic advantages in retaining and recycling old structures. Community education, through assessing community needs on an ongoing basis, provides an exceptionally good process for an identified community to present its views and guide its neighborhood's development, major components of community education.

Declining School Enrollment

One of the changes occurring within society is the declining birthrate leading to a reduction in school population. Many cities are faced with declining school enrollments and the accompanying excess of unused space in school buildings. While a few communities, mainly in the Sun Belt, are still gaining school age population, others have lost 10, 20, or even 40 percent of their elementary school population in the last decade.[4] The National Center for Education Statistics estimates that nationwide elementary and secondary enrollment declined by 4.7 million students between 1970 and 1978 and will further decline by about 3 million by 1984, forcing additional school closings.[5]

School Closings

In many large cities, school closings have created serious problems. Empty schools are targets for vandalism. This means not only loss of valuable property, but often the deterioration of the neighborhood around the school.

Mayors also are being faced with complaints from citizens over closing of neighborhood schools. The closing of a school is an emotion-charged issue—particularly if the school is a symbol of neighborhood cohesiveness and pride. In many communities school buildings serve as meeting places for community groups, and school grounds often double as neighborhood play-

grounds. Local communities want these activities continued on school sites and are opposed to demolition or conversion of school buildings to office space.

Housing Needs

Another issue of great concern to Mayors is the need for housing. Inflation and its repercussions on the housing market have resulted in a dilemma for millions of Americans seeking suitable housing. In the last decade, construction costs have escalated; this combined with cutbacks in federal housing programs and the tightness in the rental market, has served to reduce the number of choices available to citizens at all income levels. The Department of Housing and Urban Development estimates that over 18 million families in this country need some form of housing assistance. Six million of these families live in substandard housing; 10 million spend a disproportionate share of their income for housing; and the remaining 2 million live in overcrowded housing.[6]

Pressures on local government, the level of government closest at hand, for solutions to this housing shortage will increase in the coming years as more young people from the "baby boom" years search for homes.

Particularly hard hit by the shortage in housing are the elderly. More than six million senior citizens, or 30 percent of the nation's elderly population, live in substandard housing.[7] Newton, and Boston, Massachusetts, which are highlighted in this paper, perceived the need for elderly housing in their cities and responded by adapting available resources.

III. Responding to Housing Needs: Community Education Options

The community education process offers Mayors a means of providing increased services without corresponding increased expenditures. It can be an effective vehicle for providing services that are accessible, responsive, and critically needed. Community education is able to serve all age groups through the provision of programs—from after school programs for the traditional school age population to services for the elderly. In the community education process citizens can come together with schools, local government, and community agencies to develop collaborative programs, thereby linking resources to the needs of the community, a key element of community education. Thus, community education offers both cities and schools a means for innovatively responding to society's changing needs while conserving local resources.

Conversion of Schools into Housing with Community Education Centers

Many cities are faced with the problems of vacant school buildings and a shortage of housing. The community education process can be used as a tool to bridge the gap between a city's need for housing and a neighborhood's desire to retain the school building which serves as a community focal point.

Since many vacant schools are in good condition and located in areas that make them suitable for continued use, an option for cities to consider is the conversion of the school building into housing while maintaining a portion of the building as a community education center. Conversion of a portion of the building for community use can soften the blow of a school closing to community residents. Residents may be more supportive of the school closing if they can be assured of continued community use and access to the open space of the playground.

The location of school buildings in residential neighborhoods, with existing physical services in place, such as sanitation and utilities, makes them well suited for conversion into housing. Faced with a need for housing and a surplus of school space, Newton, Massachusetts, is converting portions of a vacant school into subsidized housing for the elderly with a wing reserved for a community education center. The center will serve the neighborhood in which the vacated school is located and will provide services and programs based on a neighborhood assessment of needs,

both key elements in the community education process.

Alternative (non-school) uses for vacant school buildings, which were constructed at high cost to the taxpayer, is a viable option for cities wishing to maximize all their available resources. From an economic standpoint, a building that must be abandoned as a school can be returned to the tax roles by selling or leasing it to a developer. Many older school buildings provide better quality construction, more attention to detail, and historic significance. By recycling a school building into housing while maintaining a community education center, a city can obtain needed additional housing, help to maintain a sense of continuity in the neighborhood by retaining the original structure, and respond to the interests and needs of neighborhood residents of all ages through the community education center.

Joint City/School/Citizen Planning for Housing and Community Centers

The community education process is an efficient model of community problem solving because it allows for cooperative planning, with direct input from the schools, local government, and the community members it serves. The link the community education process creates between cities, schools, and citizens can be expanded to general planning and coordination on issues of mutual concern such as the construction of schools and community facilities.

By cooperatively planning and financing facilities and allowing for citizen input into decision making, cities and schools can obtain a more creative use of space, avoid costly duplication of resources, and respond to community identified needs. As Mayors are aware, cities and schools must be sensitive to the fact that they are taxing the same citizens. Without careful management, duplication of facilities and services can occur. Moreover, providing for citizen involvement through the community education process responds to increasing community interest in neighborhood issues.

City/school cooperation in jointly planning facilities can be an instrument for responding to a city's need for housing. By constructing housing next to a community center, a city is able to provide its residents with a wide range of accessible services in an existing facility. This approach can eliminate the need for expensive construction of a city maintained multipurpose center.

In Boston, Massachusetts, a community school and an adjacent housing complex were constructed through cooperation between the School Department, the city redevelopment authority, and citizen groups. Elderly residents have easy access to the community education center, which contains a neighborhood city hall, and health, recreation, food, and social services. Furthermore, this joint use addresses the problem of the isolation of the elderly which is prevalent in many cities. The life of senior citizens is enhanced by the wide range of programs and services offered at the center where they are able to interact with people of all ages, an added benefit of joint planning and one of the key elements of community education.

Neighborhood Preservation and Home Repair

As Mayors know, the sustainment of neighborhoods is essential for the revitalization of cities. Many critical needs in neighborhoods can be met by working with residents through the community education process. The citizen participation element in the community education process allows people in a community to come together to identify their problems and needs and to devise solutions. Community education gives citizens a feeling of ownership in the community. The community programs which result from this community awareness and self-reliance can do much for the betterment and preservation of neighborhoods.

In the past few years, neighborhood preservation has received increasing attention at the federal and local levels. The responsibility for preserving neighborhoods most often falls on local governments which seek remedies to avert declining neighborhoods with their attendant increase in crime and arson.

Insufficient income often precludes households from adequately maintaining their property or paying rents high enough to enable landlords to afford a reasonable level of maintenance. As a

result, the housing deteriorates, contributing to the general decline of the neighborhood in which it is located.

In site visits to twenty cities, the Conference of Mayors has seen that many cities have found a renewed community pride in neighborhoods containing a community education center. Cities can build upon this interest by offering classes in home repair and weatherization through their community schools. Community education can be instrumental in providing citizens with a low-cost opportunity to learn methods of upgrading their homes. In Minneapolis, as a component of the community education program, classes are offered in a wide range of home repair topics, from weatherstripping to plumbing.

By supporting programs to help homeowners in the care and maintenance of their homes, cities can help to revitalize neighborhoods and upgrade housing stock.

Weatherization

An additional problem of low-and moderate-income homeowners, to which the community education process can respond, is the need for weatherization of homes. With the increasing price of fuel and the record cold of the past few winters, many cities have turned to winterization programs funded by the federal government. With the cutbacks in these federal programs, cities must find alternative ways to serve their citizens.

Community education provides a viable option. By utilizing community education centers to offer neighborhood classes in weatherization, cities provide residents, overwhelmed by rising energy costs, an opportunity to make their homes more energy efficient. Through the community education process homeowners are able to save on fuel costs and the city benefits in reduced demands for energy assistance.

Home Security

Americans are increasingly concerned about the rising tide of crime and violence in cities. Community education classes can be a positive vehicle for responding to the community concern over crime—which a recent Gallup survey showed to be the uppermost concern in the minds of urban residents asked to name the top problem facing their neighborhoods. Fear of crime has grown to the point that 45 percent of the public say that they are afraid to walk alone at night in their neighborhood and as many as one in six admits to being fearful even while at home.[8]

The citizen participation element of the community education process promotes community awareness and pride, as well as a general attitude which encourages people to look out for each other. In addition, community education centers can respond to concern about crime, offering classes in home security measures and in crime awareness techniques, such as neighborhood watch programs.

Challenge for Cooperative Planning

Present economic, environmental, and population changes require that cities and schools take a cooperative approach. Community education presents a positive vehicle for this approach. It allows citizens to become involved with identifying problems, and problem solving, which in turn enhances the relationship between the Mayor and his constituents. Whether it is recycling school buildings into housing while maintaining a community education center, building new facilities which are cooperatively planned and financed, or providing citizens an opportunity for home improvement, community education can contribute to the better use of public resources and the revitalization of neighborhoods.

When linked, the resources of the city government and the school district are better able to improve the general quality of neighborhood services and the quality of life in cities. The community education process, in which the use of community resources and interagency cooperation are key elements, lends itself ideally to this linkage.

IV. Newton: Making School Closings a Neighborhood Asset

Community Involvement

The community education process is based on citizen involvement and community decision making. This essential grassroots participation is a key element in the Newton, Massachusetts, comprehensive community education program. By maximizing community involvement and the area's resources, Newton has been able to respond to the city's need for housing while remaining sensitive to neighborhood concerns. The following case study outlines how Newton, faced with vacant school buildings and a need for housing, has found community education and its key element of citizen participation to be a pivotal process to respond to public and private needs.

School Closings and Vacant School Buildings

Newton, Massachusetts, like many cities across the country, has been faced with a dramatic decline in school enrollment. The student population, which in the late 1960s peaked at 18,000, has declined to 12,000, with a projected future decrease to 10,000. As enrollments in Newton schools have continued to decrease, space surpluses have increased due to school consolidations. This situation has required Newton to take an innovative approach to the use of vacant school buildings.

Role of Citizen Participation

In approaching the problem of school closings, Mayor Theodore D. Mann, a strong proponent of community education, recognized the need for community involvement. The school closings have been a very emotional issue due to residents' fears regarding the fate of the school buildings and concern that the neighborhoods will be losing their social and cultural focal point. Consequently, through community education, Newton's residents are directly involved in the procedure for closing a school and in the development of options for a building's alternative use.

After compiling extensive data on declining enrollments to support a decision on a closure, a public hearing is held for citizens to present their views on the school closing in question. Following the decision to close a particular school, the Mayor and Aldermen establish a citizen advisory committee composed of equal numbers of citizens from the local neighborhood and city-wide residents.

The advisory committee works with the city planning staff in examining alternative uses for the school building. The committee's recommendations are presented to the citizens in public hearings, following a briefing of the Mayor and Aldermen. The administration and planning committee of the Board of Aldermen presents the results of the hearings to the full Board, which then reaches a decision on adaptive re-use. These decisions generally correspond to the choice favored by the citizens. In Newton, the community education process of citizen planning for neighborhood services offers all citizens the opportunity for meaningful community participation.

Adaptive Re-Use

In the past few years, Newton has been forced to close eleven schools. The buildings have been converted to a variety of uses, including a community service center, a private school for exceptional children, school administration offices, and residences. The city has been able to save $270,000 to $300,000 for each school that has been closed, in addition to generating tax revenue by converting the schools to residential uses.

Two of the more recent closings have resulted in a unique approach to recycling. Following community involvement in the assessment of neighborhood needs, as described above, Newton is converting both of the schools into housing while retaining the community education centers. This usage will enable the city to provide necessary additional housing for its citizens, particularly for the elderly, while keeping the neighborhood centers and their many community services intact.

School Closings Result In More Housing and Neighborhood Services

The neighborhoods surrounding the two schools most recently scheduled for closure, Hamilton and Emerson, are cut off from the rest of the city by highways and the Charles River. Due in part to this isolation, closure of these two schools and their community education facilities, which had been important focal points for these communities, was met with great concern. Support for the schools and community education centers led to public hearings and the establishment of re-use committees. Following citizen meetings with the Mayor, the city agreed that retention of the existing structures and the community education centers would be a stipulation in the planning bid solicitations.

Preservation of the school buildings, in communities which had grown up around those neighborhood landmarks, was the prime consideration of both the city and the local citizens. Demolition of the buildings was not considered as an option.

Seniors' Subsidized Housing and Community Education Center Share Converted School

The Hamilton School, located in the multi-racial, middle-income Lower Falls neighborhood, is being converted into forty-two subsidized rental units for the elderly. A wing of the school will be maintained as a community education center, housing both a gymnasium and library. The community will also have access to a large playground, tennis courts, and parking facilities.

The newer wing of the Hamilton School will be retained as a community education center. The Newton Community Development Authority* is converting the larger wing of the school into apartments, using $1.3 million in state funds for elderly housing under the Massachusetts "667" Program. Following construction, the Newton Department of Housing Services will operate the building, receiving funds for rent subsidies under the state 667 program.

The building itself was acquired from the School Department at no cost to the city. The city then sold the building to the Newton Community Development Authority, which used Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funds to pay the $15,000 selling price. CDBG funds also paid for the cost of relocating two tennis courts lost due to necessary regrading, and for a parking area for the community education center.

*The semi-autonomous housing and redevelopment agency for the city.

Private Housing Linked to Community Education Center

The Emerson School is located in a lower-middle-income blue collar area, which recently has been attracting many young professionals. The city planning department is presently soliciting bids for conversion of the school into rental units, condominiums, or low intensity office space. The city will require the developer to retain a wing of the school as a community education center.

The developer of the Emerson School will retain ownership of the older wing of the school, which will continue as a community education center. However, the city will sublease the space for the center for $1 and provide heat and maintenance. The building will be sold to a developer for a minimum of $180,000, the price established by the finance committee of the Board of Aldermen. The funds the city receives from the sale will, by law, be placed in a surplus building fund which can only be used for capital improvements.

In retrospect, the city would have preferred to lease rather than sell the Emerson School for two reasons: (1) monies from leasing go into a fund for general rather than stipulated purposes; and (2) revenue from leasing is not subject to the Proposition 2½ Law, which states that new tax revenue must be used to further reduce city-wide taxes. State law presently prohibits cities from leasing buildings for more than ten years, insufficient time for a developer to realize a profit. However, a bill introduced by Mayor Mann which will permit the city to lease buildings to developers for up to sixty-five years has recently been passed by the Massachusetts State Legislature.

Community Education Centers In Converted Schools

The community education centers at both schools will continue to function as part of Newton's comprehensive community schools program, which is directed by a city-wide executive director. Volunteers, trained by the director, will staff these neighborhood centers in collaboration with other municipal departments, continuing Newton's strong tradition of volunteerism in a broad range of city services. The city will provide seed money for programming, in addition to furnishing heat and maintenance. The money will be provided with the understanding that the centers must explore ways to become self-supporting in the event that the city, hard pressed by budget cuts, has to discontinue funding.

Benefits

Through the citizen participation element of the community education process, Newton has been responsive to the priorities of community residents in the conversion of school buildings. Mayor Mann is a strong supporter of this form of participatory democracy. He sees the adaptive reuse of school buildings with retention of community education centers as a viable alternative for cities faced with vacant school buildings because this approach benefits both the city and its residents.

- It provides residents, particularly the elderly, with needed housing.
- The neighborhoods retain large open recreational space including playgrounds and tennis courts.
- Neighborhoods can be unified by the community education centers, through their provision of educational and social services.
- Neighborhoods maintain historic quality and a sense of continuity by retaining the original structures.

For further information about Newton's community education activities please contact:

The Honorable Theodore D. Mann
Mayor of Newton
City Hall
1000 Commonwealth Avenue
Newton, Massachusetts 02159
(617) 552-7000

Mr. Joseph Baron
Executive Director
Newton Community Schools
492 Waltham Street
West Newton, Massachusetts 02165
(617) 552-7117

V. Boston: Combining Community Schools and Housing

Interagency Cooperation

Interagency coordination and cooperation, key components of community education, offer many benefits for cities. In Boston, Massachusetts, a coordinated approach to the construction and operation of the Josiah Quincy Community School Complex has resulted in a better use of scarce resources to more effectively serve an inner city neighborhood. The following case study describes the interagency planning and operation of the Quincy School Complex and its delivery of community based services.

Need for Housing and Community Services

In the early 1960s, the city of Boston, recognizing the need for a new school in Chinatown to replace the overcrowded and dilapidated Quincy School (which dated from 1847), began planning for the Josiah Quincy Community School Complex. In examining the South Cove area in which Chinatown is located, it was readily apparent that there was a need for provision of services to the rapidly expanding Asian population, and a serious demand for housing. Recent freeway construction and university expansion had resulted in the loss of 1200 housing units in the community. The increasing number of Chinese immigrants had also contributed to the housing shortage.

Maximum Use of High Density Area

The Quincy Complex was built as part of the Boston Redevelopment Authority's South Cove urban renewal project. Located in a high density area, the complex was intensively planned to maximize land use, especially important since public programs already occupied one-third of all available land. The school site covers most of a city block, with one corner containing a high-rise apartment building for senior citizens (predominantly of Chinese descent). Because the small site does not allow open ground space, the building was designed to provide a series of public roof spaces for community and school use.

The Quincy Complex contributed significantly to the goals the Boston Redevelopment Authority set for the overall urban renewal of Chinatown: to stabilize and revitalize this unique urban neighborhood by improving economic and living conditions; and to assure the neighborhood's preservation, despite commercial and institutional development at its borders.

Role of Joint Planning

The unique construction of a school with an adjacent housing tower is the result of a cooperative arrangement among the Public Facilities Department, the Boston Redevelopment Authority, the School Department, the Tufts Medical Center, and a very active community council. All those involved agreed that the structure should attempt to remedy the serious need for housing and community services in the neighborhood.

After several years of study and planning, and countless intensive sessions with community groups, a plan emerged for a community school containing a wide range of resources for Chinatown's citizens. A housing tower, architecturally designed to complement the school, would house the growing number of elderly Chinese in the South Cove area. The desperate need for housing and the availability of this tract of land in a densely populated neighborhood were factors in the location of the tower adjacent to the school. However, a prime consideration was joint use of the school and its potential for serving the elderly residents.

The Quincy Complex, the result of years of complex planning concepts and studies, involved numerous groups and organizations. It is a good example of the benefits that can be achieved from a broad collaboration of groups jointly planning a facility.

Interagency Resources Support Construction of Adjacent School And Senior Housing

Construction of public schools in Boston, where the School Department (though fiscally autonomous) is part of the city government, is carried out by the Public Facilities Department. The Boston Redevelopment Authority, a semi-autonomous agency which is the planning and redevelopment arm of the city, was responsible for construction of the housing. The two agencies worked hand in hand on the Quincy Complex, as did the developers and architects.

A portion of the tract of land owned by the Redevelopment Authority was cleared for and turned over to the Public Facilities Department for construction of the school. A bond issue, a percentage of which is reimbursable by the state over a period of 20 years, paid for the school construction. Because the funds for the school construction became available sooner than those for the housing, the school opened its doors in 1976, two years before completion of the housing tower.

The housing was built with assistance from the Massachusetts Housing Finance Agency (MHFA), the state bonding agency which floats bonds for city housing. The 16-story, 162-unit Quincy Housing Tower is privately managed, Section 8 subsidized housing for the elderly.

Another partner in this joint planning was Tufts Medical Center, which agreed to provide certain services to the elderly residents. This guarantee resulted in a monetary gift to the health clinic.

Community Participation

The Quincy School Community Council was intensively involved in the entire planning process over the years. The council greatly influenced the program's philosophy and participated in the architect selection process and subsequent design sessions. The council still maintains an office in the school today, and determines program policies and directions. The council's policy decisions are carried out by the Quincy Community School staff who direct the daily operations and develop the multiservice/educational programs of the community school.

Community Services

Original plans for the Quincy, following many meetings between the city, the developers, and community groups, called for the school to contain a neighborhood health clinic, "little city hall," community activity and agency spaces, and recreation facilities.

These plans were realized, and health and dental care is provided in the Health Center, which had over 38,000 visits last year. The housing of a little city hall helps to decentralize city government and provides a responsible base for local citizens' needs, from rent control assistance to translation services. The services at the Quincy Center are based on a determination of neighbor-

hood need, an essential part of the community education process. These services, coordinated by the community education staff, range from English as a Second Language for all ages, to enrichment programs and recreation activities.

The South Cove Golden Age Center, a non-profit provider of services to the elderly, is located on the ground floor of the housing tower. The center provides a variety of services to the elderly, including day care and a hot lunch program.

Benefits

With funds for community services diminishing, cities are recognizing the advantages of a coordinated approach to the resolution of community concerns. In Boston, Mayor Kevin White sees the joint planning component of the community education concept as part of that city's overall thrust to conserve resources and reduce costs. He recognizes the many benefits which have resulted from the interagency cooperation involved in the Josiah Quincy School Complex.

- Intergenerational contact has evolved naturally, benefitting both young and old.
- A safe and accessible meeting place for the elderly is provided by the community center.
- Neighborhood pride in the complex has resulted in reduced vandalism.
- Bilingual health services have improved health care of the non-English speaking residents.
- Duplication of services has been reduced and city resources conserved.
- Boston is more effectively serving its citizens, maximizing tax dollars in the process.

For further information about Boston's community education activities please contact:

The Honorable Kevin H. White
Mayor of Boston
City Hall
Boston, Massachusetts 02201
(617) 725-4400

Mr. Donald B. Manson, Director
Public Facilities Department
City Hall
Boston, Massachusetts 02201
(617) 725-4920

Mr. Jim Yee
Community School Coordinator
Quincy Community School
885 Washington Street
Boston, Massachusetts 02111
(617) 426-6660

VI. City Programs In Repair, Weatherization, and Home Security

In cities across the country Mayors are faced with a myriad of neighborhood and housing problems.

- Older neighborhoods, in various stages of decline, necessitate city efforts in neighborhood preservation.
- Increasing energy costs and fluctuating energy supplies require local governments to share in the responsibility for dealing with the energy problems of their local communities.
- Rising crime rates are severely impacting upon cities where citizens cite the high crime rate as the main reason for wanting to leave urban areas.

Mayors, recognizing the challenge these problems present, have turned to the community education process for delivery of responsive housing programs. Several cities are offering classes through their community schools on such topics as home repair, weatherization, and home security. Community education also has provided a means for communicating the availability of neighborhood resources and services through newsletters, displays, and fairs. Mayors see community education as a positive, low-cost means of responding to citizens' needs while bettering the community. The following are examples of how the community education process has been used in various cities in the United States.

Anchorage, Alaska: Skills Bartering

The community education program in Anchorage, acting as a referral agency, offers a skills bartering system which has provided local residents with a low-cost option for improving their homes.

Bartering System Newsletter

The community education coordinator distributes a newsletter, updated monthly, to all those who have expressed interest in the bartering system through phone calls or letters. The newsletter lists the names, addresses, and phone numbers of individuals next to the skills they have to offer and the skill for which they have a need. The system is advertised in local newspapers and, with community support, has grown tremendously in the past year.

Resources Meet Needs

The goal of this community education program is to allow people to work together and help

each other by matching one person's needs with another's resources. Examples of bartering have included:

- plumbing repair for electrical work
- carpet cleaning for carpentry
- wallpapering for roofing
- small furniture repair for auto repair.

For further information about Anchorage's community education activities please contact:

The Honorable George M. Sullivan
Mayor of Anchorage
Pouch 6-650
Anchorage, Alaska 99502
(907) 264-4431

Ms. Jill Waters
Superintendent of Community Programs
Pouch 6-650
Anchorage, Alaska 99502
(907) 264-4366

Colorado Springs: Home Repair and Weatherization

Colorado Springs has offered several classes in home repair and weatherization through its community schools. For one such class, the community education coordinator approached a local hardware store owner who agreed to teach a class in plumbing, roofing, and tiling, in addition to providing the necessary materials at no cost to residents.

Home Repair for the Elderly

Recently, a community education coordinator has allied herself with a local non-profit housing agency which identifies those low-income elderly whose homes are badly in need of repairs. The coordinator recruits volunteers to do weatherstripping, caulking, insulating, and installation of water saving devices in the homes of these elderly residents. Neighbors are invited to watch as the repairs are carried out. Thus, a two-fold purpose is served. The elderly homeowner receives free repairs and local citizens learn methods of upgrading their own homes.

Energy Audits

The community education program has also encouraged citizens to take advantage of the comprehensive home energy audits conducted by the local utilities company for a $15 fee. The audit pinpoints energy loss areas and provides citizens with a list detailing where they can make energy savings.

For further information about Colorado Springs' community education activities please contact:

The Honorable Robert M. Isaac
Mayor of Colorado Springs
P.O. Box 1575
Colorado Springs, Colorado 80901
(303) 471-6600

Mr. Gene Blackney
Director of Community Schools
316 North Weber
Colorado Springs, Colorado 80903
(303) 635-6795

Minneapolis: Home Improvement Education

Community schools throughout Minneapolis offer basic information to citizens on how to take care of their homes.

Programs to Fit Neighborhood Needs

The Citywide Advisory Committee on Home Improvement Education (CACHIE), a component of the community education program, works with local community education coordinators to shape programs to fit the individual housing needs of neighborhoods. Classes taught by housing professionals are offered on a variety of topics, including home plumbing and wiring, weatherstripping and caulking, home repair and maintenance, do-it-yourself energy audits, simple electrical repairs, and basic carpentry techniques.

"How-to" Newsletter

CACHIE publishes a monthly newsletter, *Homeworks*, which contains articles on home improvement topics with a "how-to" emphasis, home repair class listings, and information on

agencies which can help with home repair questions and problems.

Tools for Learning

CACHIE also makes Home Maintenance Learning Tools available to interested groups. These are modular teaching units on eight topics: insulation, electrical work, plumbing, interior maintenance, exterior maintenance, heating and cooling, structure, and windows and doors. The units, shaped like phone booths, contain tools and equipment to facilitate the learning process.

For further information about Minneapolis' community education activities please contact:

The Honorable Donald Fraser
Mayor of Minneapolis
127 City Hall
Minneapolis, Minnesota 55415
(612) 348-2100

Ms. Martha Winslow
Project Manager, CACHIE
Lehmann Center - 1006 West Lake Street
Minneapolis, Minnesota 55408
(612) 348-4085

Roanoke: Home Security

In cooperation with a local non-profit organization, the Roanoke Neighborhood Alliance, the community education program in Roanoke offers a class to instruct residents in home security and crime watch prevention.

Police Involvement

A local police officer informs citizens about methods of making their homes more secure, including a demonstration of differing types of bolts and locks. Crime awareness films are used to encourage residents to be more aware and alert and to report suspicious activity in their neighborhoods. Security devices such as alarm systems and light timers are also discussed.

As a component of the course, a convicted burglar details for community residents the key elements he looked for before entering and robbing a home.

For further information about Roanoke's community education activities please contact:

The Honorable Noel Taylor
Mayor of Roanoke
215 Church Avenue, S.W.
Roanoke, Virginia 24011
(703) 981-2444

Ms. Martha Akers
Supervisor of Community Education
P.O. Box 13145
Roanoke, Virginia 24031
(703) 981-2661

Wichita: Housing City Services

Wichita, although it does not have a formal community education program with a director and staff, has adopted several key elements of the community education process. The city, through a joint use agreement with the school board, has constructed multipurpose community centers adjacent to schools. The buildings, planned with input from community residents, the city, and school board, have resulted in cost savings through shared use of facilities, and have expanded the scope of services available to the community—two goals of the community education process.

Housing Assistance Programs

City and county social service agencies, housed in a wing of the community centers, provide multifaceted programs to area residents. The Community Action Agency, which addresses the needs of low-income persons, offers various housing assistance programs. These services include weatherization assistance, housing relocation and housing search assistance, and tenant-landlord relations counseling.

For further information about Wichita's community education activities please contact:

The Honorable Robert Brown
Mayor of Wichita
455 North Main Street
Wichita, Kansas 67202
(316) 268-4331

Mrs. Imogene Patrick
Director of Neighborhood Services
Department of Human Resources
455 North Main Street
Wichita, Kansas 67202
(316) 268-4606

VII. Implementation Strategies for Initiating The Community Education Process

Policy Making Support

The community education process seeks to identify the needs and wants of the community and assists in developing facilities, programs, staff, and leadership in response to those needs. Implementation of this process requires a collective effort by numerous groups and individuals who are committed to the community education concepts of broader use of schools, community involvement, and interagency cooperation. Policy making support from citizens, local leaders, and representatives of community groups who are knowledgeable and supportive of community education can be a significant factor in the success of a program.

Although the developmental process may vary by community, the following are suggested steps for implementing a community education program.

Development of a Task Force or Planning Group

The Mayor and school superintendent should appoint a community education task force to do initial planning. This task force should be representative of the community, city government, and school district, including principals, teachers, and custodians. School district representation is particularly important. The administration of community education activities is greatly facilitated when school personnel understand the goals and purposes of community education.

The task force should have clear objectives to help facilitate organizing efforts. Task force members should address such questions as: how many community education centers should be established; what means of financing should be pursued; what human and financial resources already exist in the community; what are the wants and needs of the community; and what is the role and composition of a community advisory council.

Site Selection Criteria

The task force should determine the criteria for selection of facilities for the community education program. These should include the following:

- accessibility to residents;
- eligibility for funding;

- avoidance of duplication of services;
- need for services (rate of crime, truancy, neighborhood instability, etc.); and
- interest of the community.

Funding

The task force should determine what existing resources are available to support community education. Depending upon the community and the design of the program, a user fee system may be appropriate. A variety of state, local, and private resources can offer funding sources, including city or school district revenue, state department of education funds, local private donors, tuition and fees from community participants, and in-kind city contributions.

Needs Assessment

The task force should conduct an initial needs assessment using existing communications networks to survey neighborhoods. These networks may include:

- schools (home surveys and Parent Teacher Association meetings);
- churches;
- social service agencies (welfare agencies, probation department); and
- police department.

This process for identifying areas of concern will provide a preliminary assessment of the wants and needs of the community and the available human and financial resources.

Organizing Advisory Councils

Each community education center should have a neighborhood advisory council. The task force should devise a means for appointing or electing the first councils and should establish a procedure for subsequent elections. The purpose and authority of the advisory councils should be clearly defined by the task force from the outset in order to avoid later misunderstandings. The means to support the councils should be carefully considered. In Birmingham, Alabama, the councils receive city funds as a measure of official approval. However, the Austin councils prefer private support, believing it allows more independent operation.

The task force may also want to consider forming a community education consortium, as in the Austin program. Austin's consortium consists of elected representatives from each of the neighborhood community education centers, as well as individuals representing organizations and governmental agencies. The consortium's purpose is to receive recommendations from the neighborhood advisory councils and to develop city-wide policies for the total program.

Administration

Administration of community education programs generally falls into three categories as it relates to city involvement:

- school-administered with city support (the most common);
- joint city/school administered; and
- city-administered (least common).

Many Mayors have found that joint city/school responsibility for community education programs provides for maximum coordination and conservation of resources. As Mayor Carole Keeton McClellan of Austin, Texas, stated in her presentation to the Mayors Leadership Institute, "A great deal of time and effort could have been saved in Austin if the community education program had originated as a city/school program."

VIII. Resources

Community education is a process that emphasizes the use of existing resources through interagency planning and coordination; as a result, additional funds may not be needed to implement a program. However, as discussed in the previous chapter, various state, local, and private resources may also be available to support community education activities. In addition, technical assistance as well as numerous publications are available to cities interested in starting a community education program.

Technical Assistance

Free technical assistance for program development is available from state departments of education and/or university based community education centers. Cities may obtain the name of the nearest community education center by writing to:

Community Education Program
Department of Education
7th and D Streets, S.W.
Washington, D.C. 20202
Attention: Ron Castaldi, Director

or

U.S. Conference of Mayors
1620 Eye Street, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20006
Attention: Carol Moody Becker
Staff Director for
Education Programs

Publications

- Cities interested in a city government/school district community education model may wish to receive copies of the report, *Community Education Proven Practices – Local Government Participation.* This publication describes in detail how Austin, Texas, developed a community education partnership involving local government, the schools, and citizens. The paper also explores the development of similar community education models in other urban settings. Copies may be obtained by writing to:

  Community Education Program
  Department of Education
  7th and D Streets, S.W.
  Washington, D.C. 20202
  Attention: Ron Castaldi, Director

- The Educational Facilities Laboratories has published a book, entitled *Community School Centers,* which examines the role of community education centers in the coordinated delivery of social services and the better use of public resources. The publication describes the planning, management, and design of community school centers, and provides a chapter on resources.

  Copies may be obtained by writing to:

  Educational Facilities Laboratories
  680 Fifth Avenue
  New York, New York 10019

- Those interested in the development of community service centers may wish to order copies of the publication, *Developing, Managing and Operating Community Service Centers,* by Joseph Ringer, Jr. This publication provides basic information on the decision making process, facility planning, and management procedures for a community service center, as well as highlighting the key elements for success in such centers.

  Copies may be obtained by writing to:

  Mid-Atlantic Center for Community Education
  School of Education, Ruffner Hall
  University of Virginia
  Charlottesville, Virginia 22903

- The Comrnunity Education Clearinghouse collects, organizes, and disseminates information on community education. The Clearinghouse publishes newsletters and directories, conducts literature searches, and has a toll free phone number to respond to questions and offer referrals. For further information contact:

  National Community Education Clearinghouse
  1030 15th Street, N.W.
  Suite 536
  Washington, D.C. 20005
  Toll free number: 800-424-8874

Footnotes

[1] Department of Education, *The Federal Experience Under the Community Schools Act* (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1980).

[2] *Organizing a Community School* (Newton, Massachusetts: Newton Community Schools, 1980).

[3] National Community Education Advisory Council, *Community Education: The Federal Role* (Washington, D.C.: Department of Education).

[4] *Using Surplus School Space for Community School Centers* (New York: Educational Facilities Laboratories, 1979), p. 4.

[5] Comptroller General of the United States, *Use of Vacant Schools Could Provide Savings to Federal Construction Programs,* Publication No. HRD-81-28 (Washington, D.C.: U.S. General Accounting Office, 1981), p. 11.

[6] Comptroller General of the United States, *How to House More People at Lower Costs Under the Section 8 New Construction Program,* Publication No. CED-81-54 (Washington, D.C.: U.S. General Accounting Office, 1981), p. 1.

[7] James D. Manney, Jr., *Aging in American Society* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan - Wayne State University, 1975), pp. 162-163.

[8] George Gallup, "Americans See Surge of Crime; Most Take Preventive Measures," *Gallup Poll,* April 5, 1981.